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Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6284th meeting

Wednesday, 17 March 2010, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Issoze-Ngondet	(Gabon)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. La Yifan
	France	Mr. Araud
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Lebanon	Ms. Ziade
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	Uganda	Mr. Mugoya
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

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10-27475 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Djédjé (Côte d'Ivoire) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Choi Young-Jin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Choi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Choi Young-Jin, to whom I now give the floor.

Mr. Choi Young-Jin: The political impasse that started in early January this year in the wake of the production of the second electoral list by the former Independent Electoral Commission Chairman, Mr. Mambé, resulted in a serious weakening of the electoral momentum.

It is quite regrettable to see the elections delayed once again. Our disappointment is all the more acute as the elections, which had been in preparation for so long, appeared to be within our grasp when the provisional electoral list, which was highly credible and well-balanced, was established in November.

With the formation of the new Government and the new Electoral Commission in March, two issues are likely to dominate Ivorian politics for the immediate future: elections and reunification within the framework of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement.

As illustrated by the recent violence in various parts of the country, which has resulted in 12 deaths and a score of seriously injured persons, the current election-reunification dynamics may cause additional violent demonstrations and casualties.

Under the circumstances, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) has set three objectives for the immediate future: first, maintaining peace and stability; secondly, safeguarding past achievements, including the provisional electoral list; and thirdly, establishing the definitive electoral list as expeditiously as possible.

With UNOCI staff and the international community in Abidjan, I shall continue working with the Ouagadougou Political Agreement protagonists with a view to producing the definitive electoral list as soon as possible and developing a clearer picture of the unfolding election-reunification dynamics. This approach would permit us to report on possible options for UNOCI and to prepare detailed plans in time for the Security Council's next consultations on Côte d'Ivoire.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Choi for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Djédjé (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): This meeting of the Security Council gives me the opportunity to give an overview of developments in Côte d'Ivoire since our meeting on 28 January.

During the period under review, the situation in Côte d'Ivoire has been marked by a serious crisis caused by the matter of fraud on the electoral list in favour of the opposition. The Chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission, a member of one of the opposition parties, had fraudulently registered more than 429,000 people on the electoral list. This figure represents nearly 8 per cent of the electorate.

After the discovery of the fraud, the Chairman of the Commission refused to resign, thus paralysing the institution and blocking the peace process.

The President of the Republic therefore decided to dissolve the Commission in order to replace Mr. Mambé, the perpetrator of the fraud. At the same time, the Government was dissolved, as some ministers, obeying the orders of their political parties, openly supported Mr. Mambé while the Prime Minister was asking for his resignation. A new Chairman of the Commission has been elected and a new Government formed.

Priority must now be given to compiling a reliable electoral list in order to organize clean and credible elections. To that end, two essential actions must be undertaken. First, the 429,030 people whom the former Chairman of the Commission wished to fraudulently register on the electoral list must be removed from the file. Secondly, a full audit of the provisional list must be conducted in order to remove those who have no right to be on it and to validate, at the same time, the inclusion of all those who do have that right. These operations will take one to two months, after which the final electoral list will be established for the elections.

Besides the issue of the electoral list, there remains a further significant challenge to credible elections — the challenge of disarmament and reunification. Recent events have demonstrated the need to move quickly on disarmament and reunification in order for free elections to take place in accordance with the criteria defined by the United Nations.

The current security apparatus in the central, northern and western areas controlled by the rebels has shown its weaknesses. It failed to prevent attacks against symbols of the State and buildings belonging to members of the party of President of the Republic, in particular. The headquarters of the Ivorian Popular Front, the party of the President of the Republic, was destroyed. In the same locality, Korhogo, the residences of the President of the Republic's national campaign director and other executives of the party have been ransacked and burned. The residence of the spokesperson of the President of the Republic was sacked in the town of Katiola, which is also in the northern region controlled by the rebels. The offices of the prefect of Bouaké, in the centre of the country, as well as those of the sub-prefect in Vavoua in the central-west of the country, were ransacked.

The list of damage caused by the opposition parties is long, and it would take too much time to make a full enumeration of it here. The time has come to disarm and reunify Côte d'Ivoire. This essential measure, called for in article 3 of the fourth supplementary agreement to the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, can no longer be postponed if we wish to hold free elections in Côte d'Ivoire in accordance with the criteria defined by the United Nations.

Côte d'Ivoire is one and indivisible, and the unity of the nation is reflected in the unity of the army of the Republic, by the unity of the State coffers, through the deployment of prefects and sub-prefects as the sole legal representatives of the State in the territorial constituencies, and by the deployment of defence and security forces that must perform sovereign State tasks within those territorial constituencies.

The United Nations, which enshrines within its Charter the sacrosanct concept of sovereignty, cannot promote fragmented sovereignty to serve individual interests. The United Nations cannot validate an alleged national poll in a bisected territory where supporters of one of the candidates are denied access to a part of the same territory, or where a private television channel in the area controlled by rebels campaigns for only one of 14 candidates.

The United Nations must make every effort to support the facilitator in the Ivorian crisis, who is working tirelessly to find a solution to the issue of reunification. The electoral process should not be turned into dogma that is to be blindly applied to end all types of crises.

Côte d'Ivoire will proceed with elections as soon as possible if, at the same time, important progress is made in the implementation of articles 3 and 8 of the fourth supplementary agreement to the Ouagadougou Political Agreement related to the restoration of State authority throughout the territory, which is the real solution to the Ivorian crisis.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no further speakers on my list.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.